

NO QUARTER Candidate's old shoplifting bust surfaces

Publication date: 3/16/2008

Byline: DANIEL BICE

Christopher Larson is a 27-year-old business manager for a series of sports stores who is the favorite to win a seat on the County Board.

But things were much different in March 2000.

Larson was a freshman at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and, by his own description, struggling to make ends meet.

That's when he was busted for retail theft.

"I made a dumb mistake," Larson said Friday.

The details of the case are fuzzy. He said he was caught stealing food from a Milwaukee grocery store. He said he can't remember exactly which items he tried to obtain with a five-finger discount. A copy of the city ticket, which carried a \$331 fine, and the court file were not available late Friday.

As part of a deal reached with a Municipal Court judge, Larson agreed to take a course in exchange for having the ordinance violation dropped, he said. Asserting that he has not stolen anything since, he credited the situation with "completely turning me around."

Asked if voters should take this matter into consideration when voting April 1, Larson said he didn't think so because he has changed so much in the past eight years. Larson, a political liberal, scored a surprisingly easy victory in the five-way primary contest to replace longtime Supervisor Richard Nyklewicz Jr. in the south-side district.